

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1910.—Copyright, 1910, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

ROW OVER ARGENTINE SHIPS

BRITISH SHIPBUILDERS TRY TO EXPLAIN A DEFEAT.

The Awarding of the Contract to America Attributed to Promises Made at Washington—Effects of Free Trade Also Blamed—British-Freeze Hurt.

LONDON, Feb. 26.—Surprise and dissatisfaction have been caused by the announcement that the Fore River Shipbuilding Company of Massachusetts has secured a victory over English firms in securing the contract for the two new Argentine warships. Various reasons are assigned for the British defeat. Some critics have jumped to the conclusion that British naval shipbuilding is on the wane and the tariff reform press has of course hastened to lay the blame on Britain's policy of free trade.

The Daily Mail lays emphasis on two facts, first, that the American price is lower than the lowest British quotation by a ton, or more than 10 per cent. of the cost; secondly, that the foreign firms were all prepared to promise quicker delivery than the British. It is pointed out that Blohm & Voss, the German firm, only required from twenty-seven to thirty months, against the thirty-three demanded by Armstrong & Vickers, and yet Blohm & Voss have now in hand three German Dreadnoughts, or quite as heavy a programme as Armstrong & Vickers. In an editorial article it says:

"The capture of the order for two Argentine Dreadnoughts by an American firm of shipbuilders is one of the most remarkable blows to free trade yet recorded. But an even more disagreeable fact remains. In addition to the British and American firms, Italian and German firms also tendered. Both Italy and Germany are protectionist States. Yet their tenders also were below the British. Indeed German yards have secured the orders for four destroyers by underbidding British shipbuilders."

"The free trade country was thus beaten by all its protectionist rivals. It came last, whereas according to the free trade theory it should have been easily first. There must be something very wrong with a theory which is so lamentably upset whenever it is tested."

This article brought forth a statement from Arnold F. Hills, chairman of the Thames Ironworks, who is building one of Great Britain's latest Dreadnoughts. In a letter to the Daily Mail Mr. Hills says:

"The suggestion that the placing of the order for the new Argentine battleships in America is a blow to free trade appears to be based on a misapprehension of the facts so far as British tenders were too high. This may be attributed to the existence of powerful rings which control the supply of armor and armament, and which, I need scarcely say, have nothing to do with the principles of free trade."

"But I may also mention that my own firm submitted designs and tenders for these battleships of at least 10 per cent. greater battle efficiency than the design selected and at some £500,000 less than the accepted price. The reasons which determined the distribution of these orders were without doubt primarily political in the widest sense of the word."

To a correspondent who criticized his statements Mr. Hills replied by suggesting that he should "inquire why Mr. Knox recently justified to the United States Senate a large increase in the secret service vote by the statement that he had been able to secure the contract for the construction of the Argentine battleships for an American yard."

The Daily Telegraph's naval correspondent, one of the best informed writers on naval matters, supports Mr. Hills' assertions. He writes that the British had much to do with the placing of the contract in America. "Many reasons," he says, "apart from the question of price, the general financial adjustment of the contract, the influence of the Argentine contract, it has been well known for some time in Washington that for political reasons influence was being used from the capital with a view to such consummation."

This suggested explanation finds ready acceptance here, inasmuch as it would prove if true that it was inability of British firms to meet foreign competition that caused them to lose the contract. With regard to the nature of the influence which is alleged to have been used at Washington the Shipping World says:

"Men of the highest authority and in the best position to know accept the statement that the two battleships have gone to the Fore River company, or the American syndicate, influenced by the guarantee that the Argentine navy shall not be attacked until the new war tonnage is in commission."

"If we assume the truth and substantial accuracy of this extraordinary statement," adds the Shipping World, "then it comes to this, President Taft and his Secretary of State, Mr. Knox, have pledged the naval power of the United States to defend the naval power of the Argentine until these warships are ready for fight, conditional upon the substantial part of the order being given to the Fore River company, or to speak more accurately, the American syndicate."

"Well, if we admit the possibility of such a thing may we ask what is to prevent Germany or France or the United Kingdom from guaranteeing Brazil or Chile or any other London client in consideration of an order for three or four battleships and six or eight cruisers, the country receiving the contract will undertake to deliver the ships before the American order can be executed and to defend their customer against Argentine and American aggression until the ships are in commission and ready to accept or offer battle to the Argentine navy?"

"We decline to believe that President Taft and his Secretary of State could lend an ear to a transaction which could only be adequately described as the most colossal piece of cupidity, duplicity and folly to be found in the history of international transactions."

The members of the Argentine naval commission now in London declare emphatically that political influence had no voice in the award of the contract. Admiral Domecq Garcia, head of the commission, who signed the contract in London on behalf of the Government, has related the history of the negotiations and explained how he was the English firms were beaten.

At first, he said, "tenders were invited from shipbuilding firms in all countries—from some fifteen firms altogether—among that number being several English firms, but the Government, too high, eight firms, including three English, were asked to tender again."

BIG HARVEST FOR TRAPPERS

LOUISIANA PROFITING FROM A WHIM OF FASHION.

Millions of Muskrats Killed to Supply the Demand for Fur—Mink and Otter Skins Also Obtained—Large Incomes for Many Men Who Have Been Poor.

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 26.—The Louisiana trapping season will be over on March 1 and contrary to expectations the fur crop of the State will be good and will leave probably \$1,500,000 in the hands of the trappers.

Half a dozen times in the last dozen years it has looked as though they would have to work for a living instead of following the free and easy existence they lead in their huts and proques along the great sea marsh of Louisiana or the rivers, bayous and lakes which empty into the Gulf. They are unfortunately exterminators.

Starting with the alligators they killed the entire aurorean tribe in Louisiana, converting them into hand bags and satchels, until there were no alligators left to kill. Then when fashion changed they set in to kill the terns, egrets and heron seabirds for their feathers. In two years they had exterminated several species of these birds and would have annihilated all of them had not the Audubon Society intervened and secured the protection of the birds by State and Federal statutes.

When it looked like hard work with the hoe and the spade for the trappers fur came into fashion and the Arctic region not being able to supply the demand substitutes were sought for everywhere. To the surprise of everybody it was discovered that Louisiana was a great fur producer. It contributed last year and will probably contribute this year more fur than any other State except the wilder States of the far West for it turned in for 1909 in a season of three months something like 10,000,000 pelts.

The business has assumed immense proportions. A number of dealers sprang up in New Orleans, and the trappers found the competition so great and prices so high that from their point of view they rolled in wealth. Think of a trapper, living in a hut a negro would disown, who probably never made \$500 a year before in his life receiving \$5,000 or \$6,000 for muskrat and mink.

The profit came in because of the great advance in prices. In the alluvial parishes of Louisiana muskrats and minks have been accounted among the greatest pests of the State, costing it millions of dollars annually. Burrowing as they do in the ground and building living places in the levees with tunnels to the river and the dry land they frequently cause crevices in the levees and overflows.

These burrowing rodents with the kingfisher and the crawfish are regarded with reason as the most dangerous enemies of the levee system. In some places, as at Bogers in Concordia parish, their numbers are so great and the tanks so riddled by their holes that levees constructed there has been impossible. At times bounties have been offered for their heads, and at a recent session of the Louisiana Legislature alligators were placed under the protection of the game law on the ground that they defended the levees, owing to the large number of muskrats they ate—a statement which has never been sufficiently established.

The alligator protection is no longer necessary as the fur of the muskrat has become so valuable as to make the trapping of the animal profitable. Two years ago the skin was worth only 5 cents; last year it ran up to 20 cents and occasionally 25 cents. This year it is 30 cents and rising. Mink skins have advanced to \$2 and \$2.50 each, other skins from \$15 to \$20 and even coons are worth 50 cents.

With the advance in prices there was a rush for the muskrats. One million are said to have been killed in Plaquemine parish just below New Orleans, and some six million or more in the State. A clever boy could easily make his \$5 a day at trapping and at a season when there is no other work to do, no other crops to raise.

Along the Mississippi River, along the Gulf coast, particularly in Vermilion and Calcasieu parishes, the trappers were active last year. Perhaps they were a little too active, for they killed more than the year's crop of rats, and it was reported that the supply would be less this season than last. The big Gulf hurricane of September 20, 1909, helped to cut down the army of muskrats. The storm drove them up from the Gulf coast to dryer land, the floods in the stream, drowned out immense colonies of them and there was a strong conviction that this year's yield would be reduced.

Perhaps it has been reduced, but not much. The animals multiply rapidly, the price of pelts has increased and the trappers with better knowledge of the muskrat and his peculiarities is able to trap them more cleverly than formerly. They have improved their methods. Instead of procuring many of them from gasoline launches which carry them from the set of traps and sewers, enabling them to harvest the crop more rapidly.

It has been a hard life this winter because there have been many severe storms, and the trappers on the Gulf coast at least, lead a very hard and exposed life, their huts being built on the marsh of palmetto bushes. Several cases of freezing to death in the swamp have been reported and other lives have been lost in the storms.

The pelts are brought to New Orleans and judging from those that have arrived so far, are indications are that the fur crop of Louisiana will, in spite of the activity of the trappers last season and the big September storm, be larger than that of any previous year.

None the less it is evident that the fur crop of Louisiana is certain to decline unless some way can be found of protecting the fur bearing animals, particularly the muskrats. The area of swamp and marsh in which these animals thrive is rapidly decreasing as the drainage work is extended by the natural course of improvements the number of fur bearing animals will decrease. When in addition to this they are hunted so continuously by the trappers, their early extermination is inevitable.

In Plaquemine parish it is proposed that the State Game Commission shall place some protection around them, that is, establish a closed season for them, but such a regulation is inconceivable. The rats are a public pest, dangerous to the levee, and it is not to be thought of that the safety of the alluvial lands from overflow will be endangered in order to put money into the pockets of the trappers. In St. John parish it is proposed to cultivate the muskrats, to have mink farms and raise the animal for its fur. The experiment will be made, but of course on a small scale, and it is impossible with the muskrats, which contribute the bulk of the Louisiana pelts.

Moreover, the Audubon Society, while protecting the birds, has declared war on the muskrats and coons, which destroy millions of birds' eggs annually, and the society has invited the cooperation of the trappers to get rid of these pests. The society owns nineteen islands off the Louisiana coast, donated by the State and Federal governments, on which it has set apart bird reservations and on which it is trying to raise sea birds. In this it would be eminently successful but for the thousands of coons and muskrats which swim from the mainland to the islands during the laying and hatching seasons and destroy thousands of eggs and young birds.

The Louisiana furs are so widely distributed that they do not yet figure conspicuously in the market supplies. Comparatively few go to New York or Boston; some are shipped to Canada and Chicago, and help to swell the supply of Canadian fur for which Americans compete. Others go abroad to London, Paris and Berlin. If they are ever worn in Louisiana it is as imported furs and certainly under another name than muskrat.

It seems odd, though, that a State regarded as sub-tropical should be helping to supply the market with what is regarded as a product of the Arctic regions.

MODERN BARBER POLES.

The Revolving Pole, Electric or Wind Driven—Steel and Cast Iron.

Electricity within recent years has been applied to the barber pole. The electric or revolving barber pole has for a middle of more in height by about eight inches in diameter, this section being supported on an ornamental base or on a stout brass rod rising from the sidewalk. The glass section of the pole is surmounted by an ornamental cap.

Within the glass section of the pole is another cylinder made of a thin, lightweight, translucent material, upon which are painted the traditional spiral stripes of red, white and blue, the familiar sign of the barber. This inner cylinder is pivoted top and bottom and made to revolve by means of a tiny electric motor attached at the top. Current is carried to this motor by wire leading from an electric light fixture within the building and up out of sight inside the pole's base. Within the inner cylinder of the electric revolving barber pole are two hundred or more electric lights by which the pole can be illuminated at night.

The electric barber pole, without a base support, is also made in the form of a bracket pole which can be attached to the front of a building; and both these styles of revolving barber poles are also made to be wind driven. Instead of a motor within it, thin wire connecting the wind driven revolving pole has surmounting its ornamental cap a gilded wind ball in form not unlike a globe shaped weather vane. Instead of a ball is attached to the pole's inner striped cylinder, and when the breezes turn the ball it turns the inner cylinder.

Formerly all barber poles were made of wood, as still great numbers are; and if a wooden barber pole is made of sound timber and set where its base will keep dry it will last for many years. But if the pole is set where water collects at its foot it will rot there.

A few years ago there was produced a barber pole of latticed iron construction. This was a great improvement, as all metal barber pole is one that which has its cylindrical column section formed of sheet steel, with base and cap of cast iron.

Brooklyn Advertisements.

PIANOS
BIG MARCH SALE

NEW \$149.
\$5 Monthly

FREE STOOL, COVER, CARTAGE AND 25 SHEETS OF MUSIC

Beginning to-morrow, we will inaugurate what we believe will be the most successful March sale in our history. We are prepared in every department. Therefore, before making a purchase you owe it to yourself to examine our hundreds of fine NEW and USED Pianos, and be assured you will save from \$50.00 to \$150.00 on your purchase. Why not be among the first?

EDWARD FISK WAS NOW \$250 \$20
\$3 Monthly Until Paid

MUNN 325 25
\$2 Monthly Until Paid

AMBLER 40 40
\$3 Monthly Until Paid

INLSNO 450 55
\$3 Monthly Until Paid

STEINWAY & SONS 650 95
\$4 Monthly Until Paid

SCHUMAN 265 145
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

MORACE WATERS 250 150
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

WHITNEY 300 160
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

WESER BROTHERS 375 175
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

HARTMANN 250 180
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

BROWN & SIMPSON 275 185
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

BRADBURY 300 195
\$5 Monthly Until Paid

STEINWAY & SONS 700 225
\$6 Monthly Until Paid

WHEELLOCK 450 250
\$6 Monthly Until Paid

PIANOS \$3 MONTHLY RENTED

COETZ & CO.

81 Court, cor. Livingston St.

One Block from Borough Hall
Open Evenings. Phone 4933 Main.

FREDERICK LOESER & CO.

BROOKLYN ADVERTISEMENTS.

The Subway to Hoyt Street Brings the Loeser Store Within 17 Minutes of Forty-second Street.

In every detail the Leading Retail Establishment of Brooklyn.

For the Last Week of the Furniture Sale

A Very Great Stock of Discontinued Patterns

At Exactly Half Price.

GROUPED ALL TOGETHER on the third floor tomorrow you will find the offering that makes the climax of the greatest Furniture Sales in Loeser history.

A very great array of furniture is marked at exactly half of the regular prices, the largest amount we ever had at such a concession.

We have gathered this Furniture from numerous good makers all over the country—the patterns that are not to be made for another season. We have added whatever Furniture from our own stock is in designs that are not to be reordered. And now, for a stock straightening that shall start us into the spring season with nothing but new Furniture, WE MAKE THE PRICES, WITHOUT RESERVATION, HALF OF OUR REGULAR PRICES.

Here are the details briefly. But better still will be your own inspection of the stock when you come tomorrow.

Parlor and Living Room Suites.

Mahogany and mahogany finish frames with coverings of damask, silk plush, panne plush and velvet.

\$21, regularly \$42. Three piece Suite.

\$29, regularly \$58. Three piece Suite.

\$31.50, regularly \$63. Three piece Suite.

\$40, regularly \$80. Three piece Suite.

\$48, regularly \$96. Three piece Suite.

\$58, regularly \$116. Three piece Suite.

\$68.50, regularly \$137. Three piece Suite.

\$78, regularly \$156. Two piece Suite.

\$80, regularly \$160. Two piece Suite.

\$80, regularly \$160. Five piece Suite.

\$91, regularly \$182. Two piece Suite.

\$102.50, regularly \$205. Two piece Suite.

\$102.50, regularly \$205. Three piece Suite.

Bedroom Furniture.

BRASS BEDSTEADS.

\$15, regularly \$30. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$21, regularly \$42. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$23, regularly \$46. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$24, regularly \$48. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$25.50, regularly \$51. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$26, regularly \$52. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$27, regularly \$54. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$28, regularly \$56. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$29, regularly \$58. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$30, regularly \$60. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$31, regularly \$62. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$32, regularly \$64. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$33, regularly \$66. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$34, regularly \$68. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$35, regularly \$70. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$36, regularly \$72. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$37, regularly \$74. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$38, regularly \$76. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$39, regularly \$78. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$40, regularly \$80. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$41, regularly \$82. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$42, regularly \$84. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$43, regularly \$86. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$44, regularly \$88. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$45, regularly \$90. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$46, regularly \$92. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$47, regularly \$94. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$48, regularly \$96. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$49, regularly \$98. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$50, regularly \$100. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$51, regularly \$102. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$52, regularly \$104. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

FREDERICK LOESER & CO.

BROOKLYN ADVERTISEMENTS.

FREDERICK LOESER & CO.

The Subway to Hoyt Street Brings the Loeser Store Within 17 Minutes of Forty-second Street.

In every detail the Leading Retail Establishment of Brooklyn.

For the Last Week of the Furniture Sale

A Very Great Stock of Discontinued Patterns

At Exactly Half Price.

GROUPED ALL TOGETHER on the third floor tomorrow you will find the offering that makes the climax of the greatest Furniture Sales in Loeser history.

A very great array of furniture is marked at exactly half of the regular prices, the largest amount we ever had at such a concession.

We have gathered this Furniture from numerous good makers all over the country—the patterns that are not to be made for another season. We have added whatever Furniture from our own stock is in designs that are not to be reordered. And now, for a stock straightening that shall start us into the spring season with nothing but new Furniture, WE MAKE THE PRICES, WITHOUT RESERVATION, HALF OF OUR REGULAR PRICES.

Here are the details briefly. But better still will be your own inspection of the stock when you come tomorrow.

Parlor and Living Room Suites.

Mahogany and mahogany finish frames with coverings of damask, silk plush, panne plush and velvet.

\$21, regularly \$42. Three piece Suite.

\$29, regularly \$58. Three piece Suite.

\$31.50, regularly \$63. Three piece Suite.

\$40, regularly \$80. Three piece Suite.

\$48, regularly \$96. Three piece Suite.

\$58, regularly \$116. Three piece Suite.

\$68.50, regularly \$137. Three piece Suite.

\$78, regularly \$156. Two piece Suite.

\$80, regularly \$160. Two piece Suite.

\$80, regularly \$160. Five piece Suite.

\$91, regularly \$182. Two piece Suite.

\$102.50, regularly \$205. Two piece Suite.

\$102.50, regularly \$205. Three piece Suite.

Bedroom Furniture.

BRASS BEDSTEADS.

\$15, regularly \$30. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$21, regularly \$42. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$23, regularly \$46. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$24, regularly \$48. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$25.50, regularly \$51. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$26, regularly \$52. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$27, regularly \$54. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$28, regularly \$56. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$29, regularly \$58. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$30, regularly \$60. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$31, regularly \$62. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$32, regularly \$64. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$33, regularly \$66. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$34, regularly \$68. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$35, regularly \$70. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$36, regularly \$72. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$37, regularly \$74. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$38, regularly \$76. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$39, regularly \$78. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$40, regularly \$80. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$41, regularly \$82. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$42, regularly \$84. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$43, regularly \$86. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$44, regularly \$88. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$45, regularly \$90. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$46, regularly \$92. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$47, regularly \$94. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$48, regularly \$96. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$49, regularly \$98. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$50, regularly \$100. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.

\$51, regularly \$102. Brass Bed, 4 feet 6 size.